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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 10/601,946 | 06/23/2003 | James M. Adams | 144237 | 7832 |
| 31248 | 7590 | 10/21/2005 | | |
| ANTHONY F. MATHENY ANDREWS & KURTH L.L.P. 600 TRAVIS SUITE 4200 HOUSTON, TX 77002 | | | EXAMINER SMITH, MATTHEW J | |
| | | | ART UNIT 3672 | PAPER NUMBER |

DATE MAILED: 10/21/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/601,946

Applicant(s)

ADAMS ET AL.

Examiner

Matthew J. Smith

Art Unit

3672

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 September 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 21, 25, 29 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Herd et al. (3974875).

Herd et al. disclose, in figure 9, a pressure line breechblock-coupling member with a releasably connected female end 351 ("251" in the specification) and a male end 301 in fluid communication with riser equipment 212 and the pressure line diameter greater than two inches (col. 3, line 47).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 3672

Claim 30 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Herd et al.

Herd et al. disclose a pressure line breech block coupling member with a releasably connected female end 351 and a male end 301 in fluid communication with riser equipment 212 but not end 301 as female and end 351 as male.

The Examiner hereby takes Official Notice that it is well known to make connections with male and female arrangements, and to make either connection member a male or female element. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the connection with end 351 male and end 301 female since it is well known to do so.

Claims 22-24 and 26-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Herd et al. in view of Reynolds (6530430).

Herd et al. disclose a pressure line breech block coupling member with a releasably connected female end 351 and a male end 301 in fluid communication with riser equipment 212 but not a tensioner, slip-joint assembly, or slip-joint tensioner.

Reynolds presents a tensioner 70, slip-joint assembly 90, or slip-joint tensioner 30 associated with a blowout preventer.

Art Unit: 3672

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the Herd et al. connection in the Reynolds system as indicated by applicant, page 18, lines 6 and 7.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-20 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

Applicants' arguments filed 19 September 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. On page 5, in line 9 applicants' state "Herd discloses ... riser equipment", then in lines 11-12, state, "Herd is not directed to...riser equipment". The examiner contends the Herd et al. disclosure is consistent with subsea systems, which usually include pressure conduits or lines. The discussion of blowout preventers and pressure control (col. 2, lines 10-40) is further evidence of Herd et al. recognizing the importance of providing connections that operate under pressure.

The argument with respect to the Herd et al.-Reynolds combination is not convincing. Using applicants' admission that something is old and well known is permissible and Reynolds does present the claimed elements.

Art Unit: 3672

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew J. Smith whose telephone number is 571-272-7034. The examiner can normally be reached on T-F, 9-4.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David J. Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3672

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


David Baghell
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3672

MJS *MJS*
6 October 2005